



**Policy Title: Travel and Business Expense Policy**

**Policy Number: BUBS 110**

**Date Issued: June 1, 2020**

**Responsible Executive: Chief  
Procurement Officer**

**Date Last Revised: February 14, 2025**

**Responsible Office: Business Services**

## **Travel and Business Expense Policy**

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### **Policy Statement**

This Policy defines the requirements and procedures for making travel arrangements, reporting expenses incurred while on university business, and approving requests for reimbursement on behalf of Baylor University (the "University"). This Policy applies to all expenses incurred in relation to travel and general university business, for which university payment or reimbursement is sought, including in the context of sponsored programs.

Non-travel related business expenses may only be reimbursed if the expenses were paid for using an individual's personal funds, and no other acceptable method of buying and paying was available at the time of purchase (e.g., goods available via the Ignite Marketplace, goods requiring a purchase order as defined in the general purchasing policy, or goods purchased using the Purchasing Card).

This Policy and the associated procedures may change from time to time at the discretion of the University. It is the responsibility of those traveling, booking travel, and/or approving expenses to remain current on these and all University policies and procedures.

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### **Reason for the Policy**

This Policy is intended to provide guidance for the most common travel-related situations; where unusual circumstances arise, the guiding principles of this policy should prevail.

General considerations:

- Travelers should neither gain nor lose personal funds as a result of authorized business travel
- Travelers should obtain necessary approvals and have travel documents in order prior to booking travel

- Travelers should use University contracted suppliers, booking, and expense management tools
- Travelers must follow the terms for travel under sponsored programs when applicable, in addition to this policy

This Policy qualifies as an accountable plan. Refer to the [Tax Manual](#) for additional information.

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## **Individuals/Entities Affected by this Policy**

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This policy applies to all employees, students, and guests who travel or book travel on behalf of the University, those seeking reimbursement for necessary and reasonable non-compensation business expenses, and those who review, approve, or record financial transactions on behalf of the University.

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## **Exclusions**

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NONE

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## **Related Documents and Forms**

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### **University Policies and Documents**

[Buying and Paying Guide](#)  
[Driving Policy](#)  
[Global Safety and Security Policy](#)  
[Insurance Resources](#)  
[Purchasing Card Policy](#)  
[Spouse/Dependent Travel](#)  
[Tax Manual](#)  
[Travel Card Policy](#)

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### **Other Documents**

[IRS Publication 463- Federal Guidelines Governing Travel and Expense Reimbursement](#)

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### **Forms and Tools**

[Travel and Expense Job Aids](#)  
[Travel and Expense Forms](#)  
[State Tax Exemption Forms](#)

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## **Definitions**

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These definitions apply to terms as they are used in this policy.

<b>Allowable Expense</b>	A necessary, reasonable, and appropriate expense incurred for the benefit of university business and therefore permitted to be reimbursed or directly charged based on the permission of the university or by the terms of sponsored programs.
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<b>Authorized Travelers</b>	Individuals who obtain advance approval to make travel-related purchases on behalf of the University.
<b>Baylor Department Card</b>	The credit card issued to business office employees by the University to pay for eligible travel and non-travel business expenses.
<b>Baylor Purchasing Card</b>	The credit card issued to employees by the University to pay for business expenses that are categorized as non-travel.
<b>Baylor Travel Card</b>	The credit card issued to employees by the University to pay for travel and business entertainment expenses. The Baylor Travel Card is the preferred payment method for employee travel and business entertainment expenses.
<b>Business Expense</b>	Any expense that is ordinary and necessary to conduct university business, and is not a travel expense. (e.g., professional memberships).
<b>Business Meal</b>	Meals taken with students, colleagues, donors, individuals or entities doing business with the University or seeking to do business with the University, in which specific business discussions take place.
<b>Domestic Travel</b>	Includes travel throughout the 48 contiguous United States, in addition to Alaska and Hawaii. Domestic travel does not include territories under the control of the United States (e.g., American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands).
<b>Expense Report Approvers</b>	University employees tasked with approving expense items and expense reports for a business unit. Approval workflow is derived automatically in Ignite Expense.
<b>Group Travel</b>	Travel consisting of 10 or more individuals, traveling to the same destination for the same business purpose.
<b>Guest Travel</b>	Any non-employee traveling on behalf of the University, including students, candidates or speakers.
<b>Ignite Expense</b>	The electronic expense reporting tool used by University employees. Expenses incurred by employee for travel and non-travel expenses using either a University-issued credit card or personal funds are recorded and supported in this tool.
<b>Ignite Marketplace</b>	The University's electronic catalog-based requisitioning and ordering system.
<b>International Travel</b>	Includes any travel with a destination(s) outside of the 48 contiguous United States, Alaska, and Hawaii.
<b>Next Class of Service</b>	Service classes are typically defined as First, Business, and Coach. Nomenclature may vary by air carrier, but in general, when upgrading, travelers are not allowed to skip a class (e.g., Coach seat cannot be upgraded to First if the flight has a Business class).
<b>Per Diem</b>	A daily allowance for expenses based on a fixed amount per day to cover the costs of meals and all related taxes and gratuities incurred. Per diem policies are established by the University.
<b>Professional vs. Non-Professional Services</b>	Professional Services encompass any occupation that requires an advanced degree (e.g., architects, accountants, engineers, doctors, lawyers, etc.). Non-Professional Services include services performed by either skilled or unskilled

### 3. Travel and Business Expense Policy

	labor for professional work, but does not require an advanced degree (e.g., translator, chauffeur, travel guide, etc.).
<b>Receipt Documentation</b>	Documentation issued by the supplier or service provider to substantiate the business transaction. Receipts must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Merchant information – name, address, phone, etc.</li> <li>• Date of transaction</li> <li>• Itemization of goods/services purchased</li> <li>• Total amount paid (points/awards exchanged for goods/services will not be reimbursed).</li> <li>• Form of payment (e.g., last four digits of the card)</li> </ul>
<b>Travel Management Company (TMC)</b>	The authorized travel agency or agencies that fulfill University business travel reservations through the use of an online booking tool or live travel agent.
<b>University Research Administrator (URA)</b>	Individuals within the Office of the Vice Provost for Research with responsibilities to manage sponsored programs.

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## Contacts

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Contact	Telephone	Office email/website
Procurement and Payment Services	254-710-1561	<a href="mailto:Travel@Baylor.edu">Travel@Baylor.edu</a> ; <a href="https://procurement.web.baylor.edu/">https://procurement.web.baylor.edu/</a>

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## Responsibilities

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<b>Traveler</b>	<p>Secures appropriate approval to travel prior to committing funds or incurring expenses.</p> <p>Adheres to policy and verifies all expenses are allowable, reasonable within the normal course of business, and adequately substantiated.</p> <p>Creates and submits expense reports within 30 days of the expense or trip end date. Note, while the traveler has the ability to delegate submission of expense reports, the traveler is ultimately responsible for the submission of any incurred expenses and bears the consequences of non-compliance.</p>
<b>Line Manager</b>	Approves that the expense was necessary to accomplish the University's objectives and that the request is in accordance with University policy.
<b>Approver</b>	<p>Reviews and approves expense reports verifying all expenses and accompanying documentation are in compliance with University policies.</p> <p>Ensures that scanned or uploaded attachments are legible prior to final report submission.</p>
<b>Expense Auditor</b>	Procurement and Payment Services employee who audits selected expense reports to ensure that expenses are in compliance with University policies. Notifies the traveler of any issues or policy violations.

<b>Card Program Administrator</b>	Procurement and Payment Services employee who assists travelers with university-issued card matters, including fraudulent charges and how to resolve with the issuing bank. Monitors for card misuse and takes corrective action, including revocation of credit card.
<b>Travel Management Company</b>	University contracted third party that issues airline tickets, hotel, and car rental reservations. Arranges group travel accommodations. Provides 24-hour travel assistance.

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## Principles and Procedures

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The University's policy is to pay for or reimburse authorized travelers for expenses incurred in the conduct of university business.

In order to qualify for reimbursement, expenditures must be accompanied by supporting documentation. The University will reimburse for actual expenditures incurred, and/or daily individual meals per diem. This Policy, and good business practices, require that all expenditures have a clear business purpose and be correctly recorded.

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## Travel Authorization

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Individual travelers are required to obtain line manager approval for the following travel scenarios:

1. International travel
2. Trip total of \$1500 or greater
3. Travel is funded by sponsored programs (e.g., grant, federal subsidies, etc.)

It is recommended that travelers obtain line manager approval prior to booking any other trip.

The line manager approves that the expense is necessary to accomplish the University's objectives and that the request is in accordance with University policy. Individuals who incur travel expenses without prior approval bear the risk that their expenses may not be reimbursed upon return.

International travel expensed to a sponsored program may require prior sponsor approval. Travelers should contact their University Research Administrator (URA) to obtain sponsor approval prior to arranging travel.

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## Travel Booking Considerations

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1. Travelers are strongly encouraged to use the University's Travel Management Company when booking business travel arrangements.
2. Employees are strongly encouraged to use their University issued Travel Card when booking individual travel arrangements and during university business travel. See [Travel Card Policy](#) for specific guidance and other considerations regarding the proper

use of the Travel Card. Travel expenses incurred using other forms of payment will not be processed or reimbursed until the trip has been completed.

3. Travelers are responsible for understanding and adhering to specific restrictions imposed by the source funding the travel, and for complying with external reporting obligations. Departmental policies and/or externally funded projects can be more restrictive than the University policy; however, they cannot be less restrictive under any circumstance.
4. A companion's (e.g., spouse, child, etc.) travel reservations may be made by contacting the Travel Management Company directly. The traveler is responsible for payment of any companion travel reservations and will not be reimbursed by the University, unless a bona fide business purpose exists. Refer to "*Spousal/Dependent Travel*" section of this policy.
5. Travelers are allowed to accept frequent traveler rewards (e.g., Delta Sky Miles, Marriott Rewards, etc.), however enrollment fees for these programs are not reimbursable.
6. Travel is considered reimbursable for up to one day before and one day following the business function. Additional days are considered personal, and not reimbursable, unless a specific business purpose is provided.

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## **Safety, Security, and Insurance**

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1. The University requires travelers to complete an [Incident Report Form](#) in the event of an emergency during domestic travel. Travelers are also required to report accidents, thefts, and other incidents that occur while traveling on university business to the proper authorities, consistent with governmental, federal, state, and local laws, and the laws of other countries in which the traveler is traveling.
2. Authorized travelers participating in university or externally sponsored international travel are required to follow the [Global Safety and Security Policy](#) and register international travel with the University's security provider. International incidents should be reported via the university's [24/7 Global Hotline](#).
3. Travelers are required to comply with export control and sanction related regulations, as detailed in the [Export Compliance Policy](#).
4. When traveling on university business, employees are covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance for bodily injury sustained in the course and scope of their employment. To protect the employee and his/her estate, evidence must exist in university records that the travel in question was university business.
5. The University's insurance programs may cover faculty, staff and students while traveling on university business. These programs do not apply while on personal travel.
6. Anyone driving on behalf of the University must be authorized by Risk Management before any driving occurs. Authorized drivers and rental vehicles are fully insured through the University's insurance portfolio and negotiated contracts with rental car suppliers.
7. Travelers are responsible for the automobile liability and physical damage associated with the operation of personally owned, non-rented vehicles to conduct university

business. The traveler's personal insurance is primary in the event of an accident; the University's insurance coverage is secondary.

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## **Air Travel**

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Travelers are strongly encouraged to book airfare using the University's contracted Travel Management Company. Travelers are required to purchase the lowest available economy/coach class airfare that meets the business needs of the traveler. Travelers are encouraged to book airfare well in advance of travel to secure the lowest fares and optimal travel times.

1. Airfare upgrades/fares/fees obtained using rewards/miles/credits are considered a personal expense and are not reimbursable.
2. Next class of service upgrades are allowable for international travel in which nonstop flight times are six hours or more.
3. All other next class of service upgrades must receive advance approval from the traveler's Business Officer.
  - For employees, next class of service upgrades supported by an approved medical accommodation from Human Resources do not require Business Officer approval. For more information, please see [ADA Policy](#) or contact HR. The ADA accommodation response letter from HR should be included with receipt documentation.
4. Airline-imposed penalties for changes to an airline ticket for business reasons or circumstances beyond the traveler's control are allowable.
5. Baggage fees are allowable. Fees related to trusted-traveler programs such as TSA Pre-Check and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Global Entry Program are allowable with prior Business Officer approval.

The Fly America Act requires the use of U.S. airlines for federally funded travel. A non-U.S. air carrier is permissible in some instances if the carrier meets one or more of the exception criteria listed in the Federal Travel Regulation (FTR) guidelines section 301-10.135-138.

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## **Lodging**

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Travelers are strongly encouraged to use the University's Travel Management Company to book hotel accommodations. Travelers are required to stay in hotels that are reasonable and appropriate for the business purpose and location, at the single occupancy rate.

1. Stays or upgrades using rewards/miles/credits for accommodations, or gifts/gratuities in lieu of lodging at private residences are not allowable expenses.
2. No show fees, in which a reservation is made and not canceled or changed within the timeframe specified by the hotel, are not reimbursable unless a specific business purpose or proper justification is provided.

3. Booking non-conventional lodging opportunities (such as those available through Airbnb, HomeAway, or similar providers) is not allowable or reimbursable unless an [exception](#) is granted in advance.
4. All original lodging receipts must be itemized and are required regardless of cost. When meals, telephone, and other items are charged to a hotel room, it is encouraged that the amounts be itemized in the appropriate categories on the submitted expense report.
5. Hotel Occupancy Tax Exemption Certificate: The University is exempt from Texas state hotel occupancy tax. Travelers should use an [Exemption Certificate](#) to avoid paying this tax. Information on potential exemption from the hotel tax of other states can be found on the [Tax and Compliance Website](#). See Out of State Hotels.

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## Ground Transportation

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Travelers are required to select the most reasonable and economical form of transportation when traveling on business. Ground transportation costs including taxi, Uber, Lyft, etc. are allowable expenses under this Policy.

Anyone driving a vehicle owned or leased by the University, or a rental vehicle for conducting university business, must be authorized before any driving occurs. See [Driving Policy](#) or contact Risk Management for guidance.

## Rental Vehicles

1. Travelers will book rental vehicles with the Travel Management Company or directly with preferred suppliers using the University's discount codes.
2. Rental of up to a mid-sized car is an allowable expense. Exceptions are permissible if there are three or more employees traveling together, if the traveler is transporting sizeable equipment, or if there are other valid business needs. The exception must be documented on the traveler's expense report.
3. All tolls, fuel, GPS, and parking fees incurred while traveling for business are allowable expenses. Tickets or fines associated with parking, travel violations, or vehicle lockouts are not reimbursable.
4. Upgrades using rewards/miles/credits are considered a personal expense and are not reimbursable.
5. Vehicle rental in foreign countries is discouraged for safety and liability reasons and should be used only if necessary for conducting university business. The University maintains contingent automobile liability coverage providing protection against claims (bodily injury or property damage) by third parties resulting from use of an owned, rented, or leased vehicle. To affect coverage under this liability policy, employees renting vehicles in foreign countries must purchase the maximum physical damage and liability limits required by law in the subject country and available through the rental car company. For specific guidelines to acquire valid insurance when entering Mexico, see [Automobile Travel in Mexico](#).



## Personal Vehicles

1. The use of a personal vehicle for business travel is allowable when it is the least expensive means of transportation. When using a personal vehicle for university business, personal insurance will be primary coverage and the traveler will be responsible for paying the deductible.
2. The University will reimburse travelers at the current IRS mileage rate for actual mileage incurred, based on point-to-point mileage between destinations as indicated in Google Maps, Apple Maps, Waze, or other mapping application. Actual business miles can also be documented with odometer readings per trip.
3. The University will not reimburse for intra-campus travel or regular commuting mileage.
4. The University requires a round-trip airfare comparison if total mileage for one trip exceeds 550 miles. The University will reimburse the lower of the airfare equivalent amount or actual vehicle costs.
5. Tolls and parking fees incurred while conducting university business are allowable expenses.
6. Tickets or fines associated with parking, travel violations or vehicle lockouts are not allowable expenses.

Vehicle Insurance Requirements for Business Travel				
	Minimum Liability Coverage	Collision Damage Waiver	Personal Accident Insurance	Supplemental Liability
<b>Personal Vehicle</b>	Personal Insurance is Primary	Vehicle Owner Bears Risk	Vehicle Owner Bears Risk	Vehicle Owner Bears Risk
<b>Preferred Rental Car Booking</b>	Included	Included	Included	Included
<b>Non-Preferred Rental Car Booking</b>	Decline Coverage	Decline Coverage	Decline Coverage	Decline Coverage
<b>International Vehicle Rental</b>	Purchase All Available Insurance	Purchase All Available Insurance	Purchase All Available Insurance	Purchase All Available Insurance

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## Individual Travel Meals

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Reimbursements for meal expenses are allowable for overnight trips only.

The University's per diem rate is established by the Payment Services office and may be updated periodically. Refer to the [Travel and Business Expense Policy Supplement on Per Diem Rates](#) for current guidance.

1. The per diem rate includes all meals, snacks, room service, and tips for an entire day while traveling for business purposes.
2. The per diem rate cannot be claimed in conjunction with group meals, business meals, entertainment, or Travel Card meal expenses.
3. Travelers may elect to claim actual meal expenses as long as actual expenses do not exceed the daily meal per diem.
4. Trips funded by a grant or contract must comply with the grant or contract even though the guidelines may be more stringent than this policy. Tips are disallowed and not reimbursable on grants funded by the State of Texas. Some grants or contracts may have specific meal or tip guidelines. Refer to the grant agreement for specific considerations.

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### **Business Meals and Entertainment**

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In situations where an employee is conducting business with one or more non-university guests, business meals and entertainment expenses are allowable. Business meals and entertainment must be directly related to university business.

1. Documentation for Business Meals requires a listing of all meal attendees, including the attendee names, titles, and affiliations, or identification of a discernible group.
2. A business purpose for the meal that includes a description of the discussion and/or purpose of the event must be documented on the expense report.
3. Reimbursement of alcohol expenses is disallowed.

Expensing alcohol or entertainment to sponsored programs is prohibited.

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### **Combining Personal Travel and Business Travel**

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Personal travel may be combined with business travel as long as it does not increase the cost of the trip to the University. The traveler must document and cover the difference for any costs incurred as a result of non-university business. Quotes must be obtained at the time of booking and attached to the expense report to show a cost comparison for any deviations in itinerary or extension of travel dates beyond the dates of business travel.

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### **Spousal/Dependent Travel**

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Under IRS regulations, travel expenses for a spouse or dependent are considered non-taxable, provided that his or her presence serves a bona fide business purpose. For information on what constitutes a bona fide business purpose, refer to [Spouse/Dependent Travel](#).

Spouse or dependent travel expenses must be approved in advance of the travel utilizing the [Spouse/Family Member Expense Travel Request Form](#). The approved form must be attached to the expense report for documentation.

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## **Group Travel**

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Group travel arrangements should be booked with the University's Travel Management Company to ensure that the best rates are obtained. Group travel consists of 10 or more individuals traveling to the same destination for the same business purpose. Examples include but are not limited to, participation in University-related classes, missions efforts, competitions, events, programs, or other initiatives.

If group travel arrangements cannot be booked with the Travel Management Company, departments should work with Procurement and Payment Services to establish a direct bill relationship with the desired supplier.

Neither Purchasing Card, Travel Card, nor personal funds can be used for group travel arrangements unless an exception is granted in advance of booking.

Group travel that includes students must be registered with [Risk Management](#) (domestic travel) or the [Center for Global Engagement](#) (international travel).

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## **Cash Advance**

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An employee may only request a cash advance when the travel meets the definition of group travel, and no alternate means of payment exist. Documentation must be provided to support the amount of the cash advance request. Every effort must be made to pay for lodging, airfare, and other expenses through acceptable channels (e.g., Travel Management Company, Ignite Marketplace) to minimize the need for or amount of a cash advance.

1. Cash advances must be requested at least three weeks prior to travel dates. Advances will not be released until two weeks prior to departure.
2. Employees may request emergency cash advances through their Travel Card, subject to limits imposed by the issuing bank. Appropriate distribution and documentation must be provided for all expenses purchased with a Travel Card cash advance.
3. Expense reports and required supporting documentation must be submitted through Ignite Expense and any remaining funds deposited with the Cashier's Office within one hundred and twenty (120) days of trip's end date.
4. Failure by the employee to reconcile or return funds within 60 days will result in taxable income.

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## Unallowable Expenses and Payment Methods

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### Unallowable Expenses

The below is a non-exhaustive list, but is intended to serve as a guide for those expenses that cannot be claimed for business and reimbursed.

Alcoholic beverages	Non-conventional lodging
Childcare	Optional trip insurances
Clothing and toiletries	Parking/speeding tickets/citations
Expenses related to normal commute	Personal insurance
Fines, credit card interest, late fees, etc.	Personal mobile phone, including accessories (e.g., chargers, etc.)
Fuel for personal vehicles	Pet Care
Hotel no-show fees	Personal Expenses
House sitting expenses	Professional or contracted services
Luggage/briefcases	Relocation expenses
Memberships for reward clubs or airline clubs	Salon and spa services

Purchases made directly from the University are unallowable (e.g. event tickets, Campus Rec activities through the SUB or SLC, Mayborn Museum, University sponsored conference registration, etc.). If purchasing from the University, an [Intercompany](#) funds transfer must be requested.

Purchases from the bookstore and dining halls are allowed, as they are operated by a third party.

### Payment Methods

Employees are strongly encouraged to use their University issued Travel Card when booking individual travel arrangements and during University business travel. Travel expenses incurred using other forms of payment will not be processed or reimbursed until the trip has been completed.

The University does not recommend the use of cash apps (e.g., PayPal and Venmo) when paying for travel and business expenses. Cash apps should only be used when no other means of payment exist.

Cryptocurrency payments are prohibited and will not be reimbursed.

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## Cancelled Trips

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It is the responsibility of the traveler to cancel all reservations by contacting the appropriate agency or supplier. Refunds, if already reimbursed by the University, must be returned to the University. Travelers are not allowed to use credits from business trip cancellations for personal use.

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## **Expense Reporting**

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1. The traveler seeking reimbursement is responsible for the timely submission of his or her own expense reports.
2. All expense reports require a valid business purpose and the approval of department financial staff.
3. Expense reports must be fully processed in Ignite Expense within 60 days of either the transaction date or trip end date, whichever is latest.
4. Expense reports submitted to the Expense Auditor outside of the 60-day window will be reported to Payroll as taxable income.

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## **Receipt Documentation**

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Original receipt documentation for all expenses equal to or greater than \$68 is required.

Receipts must include:

- Merchant information – name, address, phone, etc.
- Date of transaction
- Itemization of goods/services purchased
- Total amount paid (points/awards exchanged for goods/services will not be reimbursed).
- Form of payment (e.g., last four digits of the card)

Travelers are encouraged to include their travel itineraries with each expense report.

Certain funding sources such as state and federal grants may require additional documentation in order to process expenses. If funded by such an award, individuals should consult with their University Research Administrator (URA), prior to incurring an expense.

### **Exceptions to Receipt Requirements**

Lodging/hotel charges always require receipts, regardless of amount.

### **Missing Receipt Policy**

Individuals are to exhaust all measures to obtain required receipts. When an original receipt cannot be obtained, a [Lost or Destroyed Original Receipt Statement](#) must be completed by the traveler and attached to the expense report. The traveler must include documentation showing proof of payment, e.g., credit card charge slip, record of charge and billing statement, canceled check, or other record of payment.

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## **Tax Exemption**

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Employees are required to have sales tax removed on all applicable expenses in those states that the University maintains tax exemption. It is the employee's responsibility to obtain the point of contact at the supplier and to submit a tax exemption certificate. Tax

exemption forms and additional information is found in the [Tax Manual](#). This exemption does not extend to taxes of other types (e.g., meal tax, hotel tax, tourism taxes, etc.).

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### **Consequences of Non-Compliance**

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Expenses submitted for reimbursement that are deemed in violation of this policy will not be reimbursed. Additionally, travelers may owe the University an amount equal to the total of discrepancies or unallowable expenses.

A personal expense paid with a Travel Card is strictly prohibited. The cardholder is responsible for reporting personal transactions to the Card Program Administrator immediately. See the [Travel Card Policy](#) for additional details.

Non-compliance may result in payroll deduction, suspension of Travel Card, notification of administration, and disciplinary actions up to and including termination of employment. Actions will be coordinated with the appropriate University stakeholders, such as Human Resources, Internal Audit, Procurement and Payment Services, and Departmental leadership.